ISTIKHĀRA

SEEKING THE BEST FROM ALLAH (SWT)



SIGNIFICANCE, METHODS AND TYPES IN THE LIGHT OF FOURTY HADITH AND THE VIEWS OF THE `ULAMA

Written by Muhammad Baqir Haideri
Translated by Saleem Bhimji

بسم الله الرحمن الرحیم

Istikhara: seeking the best from Allah (swt) significance

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point

A detail explanation of the true meaning of Istikhara amp; it's proper usage.

A Supplication from al_Sahifah al_Kamilah al_Sajjadiyah

A selection from al…Sahifah al…Kamilah al…Sajjadiyah of al Imam 'Ali ibn al…Husain Zain al…`Abidin

أَللّهُمَّ إِنّی أَسْتَخِیرُکَ بِعِلْمِکَ فَصَلِّ عَلی

مُحَمَّدٍ وَآلِهِ واقْضِ لِی بِالخِیَرَه وَأَلهِمْنا مَعْرِفَه

الإِختِیار واجْعَلْ ذالِکَ إلی الرِّضا بِما قَضَیْتَ لِما حَکَمْتَ.

O' Allah, I ask from You the best in Your knowledge, so bless Muhammad and his " household and decree for me the best! Inspire us with knowledge to choose the best and make that a means to being pleased with what You have decreed for us and submitting to (what You have decided!" (١)

Introduction

point

The Istikhara is an Islamic tradition which is strongly rooted in the culture of the Shi'a especially those of Iran, India and Pakistan. Unfortunately however, it has been noticed that most people have an incorrect view of the Istikhara and the usage of it. When an important issue comes up in their lives, without delay and pausing to stop and think and ask others for advice, they will seek guidance from the Unseen One and perform the traditional Istikhara. The person, without following the specific conditions and etiquette, ...will, without delay, reach for the Qur' an or a Tasbih and

A group of these people, without even thinking about the outcome

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Translation from al-Sahifah al-Kamilah al-Sajjadiyah by William Chittick -١

of the Istikhara, will, if they understand the result as being in favor of what they really want to do and what they think is their best interest will act upon it. If it comes out `negative', they will still act upon it to try to get what they desire.

Yet another group of people, who think that the outcome of the Istikhara is like the Qur'an meaning that it is a revelation from Allah take the outcome of it as being obligatory to accept and place their lives and destiny in the result of the Istikhara.

Both of these groups have definitely not understood the true meaning of the Istikhara and the proper usage of it, since not paying attention to the first step, that is using one's reason and intellect and then resorting to asking others for advice plays a very important role and has a great effect on the actual outcome of the Istikhara.

The first group of people, who due to confusion in their own minds in regards to the Istikhara and performing it without delay, have unwittingly, fallen into a great sin of weakening the Glorious Qur'an, and of disrespecting the Noble Scripture. They have chosen their own destiny which is controlled by their own lusts and what is in their `best interests' and even some, without performing the Istikhara, fall victim to this.

The sins of the second group of people are no less that those of the first group; since without any kind of proof ... either

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from common sense or from the religion, have made it incumbent on themselves to follow the Istikhara, whose original purpose is to remove doubt and make one's heart at .ease

If a person is able to reach to this state by better methods such as thinking and asking others for advice, then it is not necessary for him to seek refuge with the Istikhara; leave aside what would happen to the one who acted upon the outcome of the Istikhara which has been performed out of confusion and ignorance and by not following the prescribed .conditions and prerequisites

The result of having such an outlook in regards to the Istikhara is that the person does not use his brain in day to day life and ends up unsuccessful in the twists and turns that life takes him through. Because of this, he loses the real rewards of this world that come .from using one's intelligence and seeking advice from others

Various types of Istikhara and the proper method of use

Istikhara by Supplication: The actual meaning of `Istikhara' is "asking what is best and (١ proper from Allah, the Merciful" which in itself is a form of supplication. Reliance (upon Allah), leaving all of one's affairs (to Allah) and having a good or favorable opinion of Allah are the requirements before one performs any supplication. This means that in all of one's affairs, the person supplicates to Allah and sincerely, asks Him to make his path .easy and to have a good outcome

.The Istikhara by supplication in all instances takes precedence

It has been recommended that before one performs even the smallest act, he start off by supplicating to Allah . In the ahadith, it has been emphasized that this type of Istikhara should be performed before every action, and is one of the reasons for the success of a :person, since in reality, the Istikhara by supplication includes

Praising and Glorying Allah coupled with modesty and humility towards Him; and asking• one's needs and requests from the One who is completely needless. Having good thoughts about Allah and that He only prefers and accepts that which is good for His servants. However, the most important thing is that one will have peace of mind and a .sound heart when performing any action

Istikhara by Seeking Advice from Others: When a person needs to find what is truly the (۲ best for him, he asks advice from the believers who are capable of providing this advice to him. However, this must be performed after supplicating and asking Allah for the best and asking Him to guide him where prosperity lies. He too only wishes what is truly the best and only He knows what is good and bad and is able to have His answer come from .the mouth of His servants

During one's lifetime, every knowledgeable person, especially during times when he needs to make a very important decision regarding his life, should not simply rely on his limited and restricted knowledge and intellect. In addition to his own brain, he is

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also in need of asking other for advice and see what others have to say since according to Imam 'Ali (‘as), it is incumbent upon a person of intellect to develop and mature in his own intellect by way of other intelligent people and from the deep knowledge and insight of .others

:He, peace be upon him, has said

حَقٌّ عَلَى الْعَاقِلِ أَنْ يَضِيْفَ إِلَى رَأْيِهِ رَأْىَ الْعُقَلاَّءِ وَيَضُمُّ إِلَى عِلْمِهِ عُلُومَ الْحُكَماءِ.

It is incumbent on the person of intellect that he humble himself to the views and` intelligence of the intellectuals and that he combine his knowledge with the knowledge of the wise people. " (۱)۲

Seeking advice from the believers who have the ability to offer advice is one of the best ways to seek help and to add insight to one's thoughts. Before one proceeds with this form of seeking the best, he should perform the supplications and ask Allah for the best and then seek advice from others so that these supplications will give a better outcome to asking others for advice. It is through the supplications and the specific favours of Allah .that the advice is given from others and guides one to what is truly the best for him

Next Stage: If a person makes the intention to perform a certain task, and even after supplicating and asking the best (from Allah), and using his own intelligence, and through thought, research and asking others for advice is still not able to reach to a conclusion and

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Ghurur al...Hikm, ۴۹۲۰ -۱

still entertains doubt and uncertainty in his heart, then the best thing to do is to once again return to Allah … the real transform of hearts and ask for `content of the heart' and for help to remove all doubts and confusion. This can be accomplished by a variety of methods of Istikhara including the `spiritual Istikhara', or by use of the Qur'an, Tasbih or '.by papers

The `Spiritual' Istikhara: This type of Istikhara is also a type of mystical relationship (٣ with Allah . It is performed in this way that after asking others for advice, and after one's intellect has not produced any results, one performs the supplication to Allah for seeking the best. While in the presence of His Creator who is free from all need and want, asks .one's needs and what is distressing him and asks Him to guide to what is truly the best

At this time, the person will look deep in his heart, and through soul searching, would see which path to follow is stronger in his soul. This will be the answer to his Istikhara, and .with certainty and satisfaction, would go ahead with one's plans

The Istikhara by Qur’an: If after a person has performed the supplication for seeking (۴ the best, and after thinking and asking others for advice still does not have peace of mind, then one is permitted to refer to the Qur’an in order to remove the doubts and through this method, seek the best (١)٣

The Istikhara (۵

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Refer to Hadith ٣٠ to ٣٣ for this method -١

by Tasbih: If after one has supplicated to Allah and after exhausted his thinking and asking others for advice, one is still in a state of confusion, then this method is used. The procedure for this Istikhara with the Tasbih has been described in hadith number ۳۴ in this .book

The Istikhara by Papers': This is the final type of Istikhara mentioned in this book that is (۶ performed by using six pieces of paper and as commonly known as Dhat al_Riqa `. Even though this form of Istikhara is hardly known or practiced among the common people, it (has a special place amongst a select group of `Ulama.(۱)

Section ۱: The Necessity of Performing an Istikhara for all Affairs

Istikhara: Success for a Muslim (۱

قالَ رَسُولُ اللهِ صلّی الله عَلَیْهِ و آله:

مِنْ سَعادَهِ أبْنِ آدَمَ أسْتِخارَتُهُ الله وَرِضاهُ بِما قَضَی اللهُ وَ مِنْ شَقْوَهِ أبْنِ آدَمَ تَرْكُهُ أسْتِخارَهَ الله وَ سَخَطُهُ بِما قَضَی الله.

The Prophet of Allah said: `Among the felicities of the children of Adam is that he asks the best from Allah and His pleasure in that which Allah has decreed for him. And among the misfortunes of the children of Adam is abandoning the asking of what is best from Allah and not being pleased with what Allah has decreed. " (۲)۵

The actual meaning of the word Istikhara is to seek the best from Allah in one's affairs, which is not only commendable, but is also highly recommended (mustahab) in Islam. This type of Istikhara which has been continuously mentioned in the ahadith is in actuality, one form

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.See Hadith number ۳۵ for this method -۱

Bihar al_Anwar, Volume ۷۷, Page ۱۵۹, Hadith ۱۵۳ -۲

or type of supplication (Dua) which Allah Himself has given great importance to in the Holy :Book

(قُلْ مَا يَعْبَؤُ بِكُمْ رَبِّى لَوْ لاَ دُعَائِكُمْ...)

Say: My Lord would not care for you were it not for your prayer (supplication)... "" ((al_Qur'an ۲۵-۷۷

In this, the first hadith, before starting any job or action, a supplication, which is a form of Istikhara has been recommended to be performed. We have been told that this is one of .the roads that lead to a person's happiness

هر گنج سعادت که خداً داًد به حافظ

أز يُمن دُعاى شب و ورد سحرى بود

Whatever treasures of happiness that God gave to Hafiz

(Was from the way of the night supplication and prayers in the morning. (Hafiz

Istikhara: A Recommendation from the Ahl al_Bait (۲

اَلإِمَامُ عَلَيٌّ { عَليهِ السَّلامْ } فِى وَصِيَّتِهِ إلى إبْنِهِ { عَليهِ السَّلامْ } :

...وَ أَكْثِرِ الإِسْتِخارَة، إذا أَمْضَيْتَ فَاسْتَخِرْ.

al_Imam 'Ali ('as) in the will to his son recommended that, "... (In all your actions) (continuously ask (Allah) for the best. "(۱

He also said, `Any time you have decided to perform an act, then ask (Allah) for what is best. " (۲)۷

The method of asking for what is best that has been most often mentioned in the ahadith, including the hadith mentioned above and has been emphasized, is that one in which one .(asks for the best from Allah in the form of a Dua' (supplication

This type of seeking what is best is not associated with the instance in which a person has ,a doubt or can not make a decision. Rather

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Nahj al-Balaagha, Saying ۳۱ -۱

Ghurur al-Hikm, Saying ۳۹۸۸ -۲

from the traditions of the Ahl al_Bait (‘as), it is clear that before we carry out any action _ no matter how small or insignificant it may be _ we are recommended and encouraged to seek help, and constantly remember Allah in all of our affairs. (۱)۸

Istikhara: As Taught by the Ahl al_Bait (۳

اَلإمَامُ الْباقِرُ { عَليهِ السَّلامْ }:

كُنَّا نَتَعَلَّمُ الإسْتِخَارَة كَمَا نَتَعَلَّمُ السُّورَة مِنْ اللهِ عَزَّ و جَلَّ.

al_Imam al_Baqir (‘as), said: "We (the Ahl al_Bait) teach the method of Istikhara (asking Allah for what is best) just as we teach the Surahs of the Book of Allah, the Glorious and the High. " (۲)۹

In reality, the Istikhara or asking the best from Allah is a type of spiritual link or connection and request of one's needs from the humble servant to the Needless and .Self_Existing Creator

The supplications and requesting what is best _ both before and during all acts, establishes a deep and continuous relationship between the servant of Allah _ who is .always in need of help, and his needless Master

This is the type of Istikhara that has been emphasized by the A'immah of the Ahl al_Bait , .(and was part of their natural disposition (fitrah

The Istikhara with the Tasbih beads and the Qur'an is the final step after one still entertains doubts and uncertainty in his mind and should only be done after seeking the best from Allah , thinking, weighing out the pros and cons, and requesting advice from .others

Section ۲: The Outcome of the Istikhara

Divine Inspiration to the Right Path (۴

قَالَ الإمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَلامْ:

...مَا مِنْ عَبْدٍ مُؤْمِنٍ يَسْتَخِيرُ اللهَ فِى أَمْرٍ يُرِيدُهُ

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۱- The various types of Istikhara by Dua' have been mentioned in Ahadith ۱۶ to ۲۲, which will follow.

۲- Wasa'il ash-Shia, Volume ۷, Page ۶۶, Hadith ۱۰۱۰۱

مَرَّةً واَحِدَةً إلاَّ قَذِفَهُ بِخَيْرِ الأَمْرَيْنِ.

al-Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘as), said: "... there is no believing slave (of Allah) who asks the best from Allah one time in his affair, except that He makes a means between the two ways. “ (١)١٠

Allah, the Glorious and the High is the Purest Perfect Being, and as long as there are no obstacles from the servant's side to prevent His mercy from being manifested, then He .will not withhold His blessings and grace

Thus, if a true servant of Allah , with sincerity and a pure heart asks Him for guidance even one time, then without doubt, Allah will guide him towards that which is good and .advisable for him

Help in Choosing the Right Path (٥

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ { عَليهِ السَّلامْ}:

مَا إِسْتَخَارَ الله عَزَّ و جّلَّ عَبْدٌ مُؤْمِنٌ إلاَّ خَارَ الله لَهُ وَإِنْ وَقَعَ مَا يُكرِهُ.

al-Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (‘as), said: "There is no believing slave (of Allah) that asks Allah -the Glorious and High -for goodness except that Allah prepares the best for him even if (he (the person) does not like it. "(٢

How unfortunate is it for man that sometimes that which is good for him lies in something that he does not like! Therefore, after one asks the best from Allah , he should not anticipate that what he is asking for will automatically be given to him and just as he .(would like it to be (since that may not be the right thing for him

A Way Out of Confusion (۶

قَالَ رَسُولُ الله {عَليهِ السَّلامْ}:

يَا عَلِيُّ! مَا حَارَ مَنِ أستخارَ ولاَ

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Bihar al-Anwar, Volume ٩١, Page ٢٥٧, Hadith ٢ -١

Bihar al-Anwar, Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۲۴. Hadith ۴ -۲

نَدِم مَنِ اسْتَشارَ.

The Prophet of Islam(‘s) said, "O' 'Ali! Whosoever asks the best (from Allah), will never be confused, and whosoever asks (others) for advice will never be regretful.” (١)١٢

The above hadith was a special piece of advice from the Prophet of Islam (‘s) to Amir al_Mu'minin `Ali ibn Abi Talib (‘as), during one of his travels to Yemen to spread the faith .of Islam

In such a dangerous mission, the most important thing that one could have asked for is a .strong heart, confidence, and conviction

Asking the best from Allah , is the method to attain these spiritual traits and .characteristics

Removal of Remorse and Sorrow (٧

قَالَ الإمَامُ عَلِیٌّ عَلیهِ السلامْ:

...مَا نَدِمَ مَنِ اسْتِخَارَ.

al_Imam 'Ali (‘as), said, "Whosoever asks the best (from Allah) will never be regretful.” (٢)١٣

The greatest outcome of asking for the best from Allah before performing an action and in all matters is to arrive at the stage of having satisfaction of the heart, removal of all .doubt and dilemma, and the elimination of all confusion and distress

Section ٣: Penalty for Not Performing an Istikhara

Failure in One's Actions (٨

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَلیهِ السَلامْ:

یَقُولُ اللهُ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ ((مِنْ شِقَاءِ عَبْدِی أنْ یَعْمَلَ الأَعْمَالَ وَ لاَ یَسْتَخِیرُ بِی.))

al_Imam al_Sadiq (‘as) said that Allah, the Glorious and High has said: "Of the reasons for the misfortune of My servant is that he performs an action but does not seek the best from Me. " (٣)١۴

The meaning of seeking the best which has been recommended to be done before all tasks as has been mentioned in the above Hadith, which if not performed will lead

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۱- Amali Shaikh Tusi, Volume ۱۳۶, Hadith ۲۲ / Wasa'il ash…Shi'a, Volume ۸۰, Page ۷۸, Hadith ۱۰۱۲۵

۲- Ghurur al–Hikm, ۹۴۵۳

۳- Bihar al…Anwar, Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۲۲, Hadith ۱۲۶

.one to misfortune, is simply asking for the best from Allah

It is the simple task of saying, `O' Allah guide us to whatever you deem is best and whatever your pleasure lies in' that one can achieve this mental state. This can grant us .prosperity in our works

Ruin and Destruction (۹

قَالَ الإمَامُ عَلِیٌّ عَلیهِ السلامْ:

إِسْتَخِرْ وَ لاَ تَتَخَيَّرْ فَكَمْ مَنْ تَخَيَّرَ أمْراً كَانَ هَلاَكُهُ فِيهِ.

al_Imam 'Ali (‘as), said: "Seek the best from Allah and do not decide on your own (when you intend to do anything). How many people have decided on their own in performing a task and their destruction was in that. "(۱)

The meaning of the above Hadith and Ahadith number ۸ and ۱۰ do not mean that before one weighs the pros and cons, uses his own intelligence and consults with others, he should immediately open the Qur'an or take hold of his Tasbih beads and seek what is good for himself and let his future be decided by one of these methods. One who acts in .this way has definitely not understood the true meaning of the Istikhara

Rather, these ahadith _ in addition to providing us with valuable supplications, also help us .to establish a spiritual link between us and our Creator

Deprivation of Blessings from Allah (۱۰

قَالَ الإمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَلیهِ السلامْ:

مَنْ دَخَلَ فِی أَمْرٍ بِغَيْرِ اسْتِخَارَهٍ ثُمَّ ابْتَلَی لَم يُؤْجَرْ

al_Imam al_Sadiq 'said: "Whosoever enters into an action without asking Allah for what is the best and then falls into a difficulty will not receive the reward (as one who had gone thru trials and

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۱- Ghurur al_Hikm, Saying ۲۳۴۶

(tribulations)."(۱)

There are some people who without the least amount of contemplation, investigation and seeking advice from others, resort to "the well-known types of Istikhara" to decide everything in their lives.

Before they proceed to do anything, without thought and getting recommendations from others, they seek help and resort to the Qur'an or the Tasbih beads to help them decide the path to choose.

It must be pointed out that this view about the Istikhara is completely wrong and is diametrically opposed to the clear verses of the Qur'an and the ahadith which clearly mention the need for one to use his own Godgiven intellect and thinking before proceeding to perform any action.

These kind of people who consider the value of thought and seeking advice from others to be something baseless are actually suffering from a lack of intelligence and in most instances in their daily lives, will be bound to blunder.

Section ۴: The Necessity of Being Pleased With the Outcome of an Istikhara

The Trust of the Imams in the Outcome of an Istikhara (۱)

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَلامُ:

مَا اُبَالِي إِذاَ إِسْتَخَرْتُ اللهَ أَيَّ طَرَفِي وَقَعَتْ.

al-Imam al-Sadiq ('as) said: "It does not matter to me that when I seek the best from Allah, which way it falls (whether it results in ease for me, or causes me difficulties)." (۲)

The true believer has no doubt that Allah, the Glorious, only wants the very best (for His servants). He knows that Allah (swt) is the endless ocean of Mercy and that it is far from His glory that His servant calls upon Him and asks for the best, and He makes him wait.

From another angle, the

۱ - Bihar al-Anwar Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۲۳, Hadith ۲ / al-Mahasin, Volume ۲, Page ۴۳۲, Hadith ۲۴۹۸

۲- Bihar al-Anwar, Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۲۳, Hadith ۳۳۰

true believer has a firm belief that Allah has the power to open up one's path to prosperity .and ease

The true believer knows and understands that what is good for him does not always lie in ease and comfort; and sometimes, it is possible that what is truly good for him may be in .observing patience and enduring trials and tribulations

In light of the three points mentioned above, after the true believer supplicates and sincerely asks for the best from Allah , he must not despair or become disheartened. Whatever actions he performs afterwards must be discharged with complete satisfaction .and conviction of the heart

One Must Believe that an Istikhara will Solve the Dilemma (۱۲

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَّلامْ:

مَنِ اسْتَخَارَ اللهَ راَضِياً بِمَا صَنَعَ اللهُ خَارَ اللهُ لَهُ حَتْماً.

al-Imam al-Sadiq (‘as), said: "Whosoever asks Allah for the best and is pleased with what Allah has decided for him, then without doubt, Allah will secure the best for him. " (۱)۱۸

According to the above-mentioned hadith, the pleasure of the person will be in that which Allah decides after the person has asked Allah for what is the best. This is one of the .etiquette and conditions before one performs the customary Istikhara

Before one asks Allah for the best, it is imperative that attention is paid to the following :point

مَا مِنْ مُؤْمِنٍ يَدْعُو اللهَ إِلاَّ اسْتَجَابَ لَهُ.

)There is no believer that calls upon Allah except that He answers the call. "(۲)"

That which a person supplicates to Allah for is either granted in this world - sooner or later, or it will be

۱- al-Kafi, Volume ۸, Page ۲۴۱, Hadith ۳۳ / Mahasin, Page ۵۹۸, Hadith ۱ / Wasa'il ash-Shi'a,

Volume ۸, Page ۶۳, Hadith ۱۰۰۹۴

Uddatul Da'ee, Page ۳۴, Hadith ۸ / Wasa'il ash_Shi'a, Volume ۴, Page ۱۰۸۴, Hadith ۹ – ` ۲

given to him in the next world; or something bad that was going to happen to him which was impending to occur, will be averted (١)٢٠

Opening of the Doors of Goodness (١٣

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَلامْ:

مَنِ اسْتَخَار اللهَ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ مَرَّةً وَاحِدَةً وَهُوَ راَضٍ بِمَا صَنَعَ اللهُ لَه خَارَ اللهُ لَهُ حَتْماً.

al…Imam al…Sadiq (as) said: "Whosoever asks Allah, the Glorious and the High for the best a single time and is content with what Allah has decided for him, then Allah will definitely (make that which is good for him come about. "(٢

One of the most important etiquette of seeking the best from Allah is that one must have certainty that He will decide the best for His servants and that He has the power to give or .withhold whatever is best for His servant

In short, the servant must have complete satisfaction and peace of heart that after performing the Istikhara, whatever is truly the best for him is the only thing that Allah will .decide

Section ۵: Danger of not Being Satisfied with the Outcome of an Istikhara

Leveling Accusations against Allah (١۴

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَلامْ:

مَنِ اسْتَخَارَ اللهَ فِى أَمْرِهِ فَعُمِلَ أَحَدُ الأَمْرَينِ فَعُرِضَ فِى قَلْبِهِ شَىْءٌ إِتَّهَمَ اللهَ فِى قَضَائِهِ.

al…Imam al…Sadiq (as) said: "Whosoever seeks the best from Allah in his affair, and acts upon one of the options (either performs or does not perform an action) but has something enter into his heart (unhappiness or doubt regarding to how he acted), has leveled an (unfounded) accusation against Allah." (٣)٢٢

It is possible that not being truly happy with the outcome of the Istikhara has it roots

Uddatul Da’ee, Page ۲۴, Hadith ۸ /Wasa'il ash…Shi'a, Volume ۴, Page ۱۰۸۶, Hadith ۸ -` ۱

Fath al…Abwab, Page ۲۵۷ ۱ Mahasin, Page ۵۹۸, Hadith ۱ / Bihar al…Anwar, Page ۹۱, Hadith -۲
(۲۵۶

Bihar al…Anwar, Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۲۵ -۳

:in one of the following

Doubt whether Allah (swt) truly wants the best (for His servants), which in reality is .۱ laying an unsupported accusation that Allah is greedy and does not want good for His .servants

Doubt in the knowledge of Allah concerning what is truly good, which in reality is laying .۲ .the charge that Allah is ignorant and is imperfect

Doubt in the power of Allah in deciding what is truly the best. This action charges Allah .۳ .with being weak and powerless

Doubt that Allah (swt) does not pay attention to His servants and their asking for the .۴ . best from Him. This action insinuates that there is some defect in the mercy of Allah

One must have complete certainty in whatever Allah has decided, and be pleased that He would do only what is good for His servants. This is because without a doubt, Allah will guide His servants to that which is good and that in which lies his betterment, however .many sins the servant of Allah has on his record

Being Distanced from the Mercy of Allah (۱۵

سُئِلَ عَنْ أَبِی عَبْدِ الله عَلیهِ السَلامْ:

مَنْ أَبْغَضَ الْخَلْقِ إِلیَ الله؟ قَالَ عَلیهِ السَلامْ: مَنْ یَتَّهِمُ إِلَیْهِ. قِیلَ وَ أَحَدٌ مَنْ یَتَّهِمُ الله؟ قَالَ عَلیهِ السَّلام نَعَمْ. مَنِ اسْتَخَارَ الله فَجَائَتْهُ الْخِیَرَهُ بِمَا یُکْرِهُ فَسَخَطَ. فَذَالِکَ یَتَّهِمُ الله.

al…Imam al…Sadiq (as) was once asked: "Who is the worst creation in the eyes of Allah?" The Imam (as) ,replied, "The one who levels an accusation against Him (Allah). " The person retorted, "Is it possible for

a person to level an accusation against Allah?" The Imam (as) ,replied, "Yes. The one who asks Allah for the best and it (the best) is given to him but in the way of something that he does not like, and he becomes upset. Thus, this is the one who has leveled an accusation against Allah. ” (١)٢٣

Section ۶: The Various Forms of Istikhara: Istikhara by Supplication

The Recitation of the Phrase: `I seek the best from Allah' and the number of times to (١۶ 'recite

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَلامْ:

تَقُولُهَا فِى الأَمْرِ الْعَظِيمِ مِائَهَ مَرَّهٍ و مَرَّهٍ وَ فِى الأمْرِ ((أَسْتَخِيرُ اللهَ)) الدُّون عَشْرَ مَرَّات.

:al...Imam al...Sadiq (as), said: "In the case of an important action, recite

أَسْتَخِيرُکَ اللهَ

I seek the best from Allah' one hundred and one times, and for a lesser important action,` recite it ten times. " (٢)٢۴

The Supplication for `Seeking the Best' and the Number of Times to Recite it (١٧

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَلامْ:

مَا اسْتَخَارَ اللهَ عَبْدٌ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّهً بهَذِهِ الإِسْتِخَارَهِ إِلاَّ رَمَاهُ اللهُ بِالْخِيَرَهِ يَقُولُ: ((يَا أَبْصَرَ النَّاظِرِينَ وَيَاأَسْرَعَ الحَاسِبِينَ وَ يَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ وَ يَا أَحْكَمَ الْحاكِمِينَ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ وَأَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ و خَرْلِي فِى الأَمْرِ الَّذِى أَرَدْتُ.))

al...Imam al...Sadiq (as), said: "No servant asks Allah for the best seventy times in this :method except that Allah gives him what is best ... and he should say

يَا أَبْصَرَ النَّاظِرِينَ وَ يَاَ أَسْمَعَ السَّامِعِينَ وَ يَا أَسْرَعَ الْحَاسِبِينَ وَيَا أَرْحَمَ الرَّاحِمِينَ و أَحْكَمَ الْحَاكِمِينَ صَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ و أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ و خَرْلِى فِى الأمْرِ الَّذِى أَرَدْتُ.

O' the best Seer of Seers and O' the best Hearer of Hearers and O' the Quickest of" Reckoners and O' the Most Merciful and O' the Judge of Judges! Send your blessings on Muhammad and his family and grant

۱ - Makarim al-Akhlaq / Mahasin Barqi, Page ۵۹۸, Hadith ۵ / Bihar al-Anwar, Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۲۳, Hadith ۲

۲- Fath al-Abwab, Page ۲۵۲ ۱ Wasa'il ash-Shi'a, Volume ۹ , Page ۷۷, Hadith ۱۰۱۲۴

(me the best in the action which ۱ have intended to perform. "(۱)

(The Supplication for Asking for the Best (Istikhara (۱۸

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَّلامْ:

قالَ قُلِ ((أَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّى أَسْتَخِيرُکَ بِرَحْمَتِکَ وَ أَسْتَقْدِرُکَ الْخَيْرَ بِقُدْرَتِکَ عَلَيْهِ لِأَنَّکَ عالِمُ الْغَيبِ وَ الشَّهادَهِ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ فَأَسْأَلُکَ أَنْ تُصَلِّىَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ النَّبِيِّ وَ آلِهِ كَما صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْراهِيمَ وَ آلِ إِبْراهِيمَ إِنَّکَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ. أَللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كانَ هذَا الأَمْرُ الْذِى أُرِيدُهُ خَيْراً لِى فِى دِينِى وَ دُنْيایَ وَ آخِرَتِى فَيَسِّرْهُ لِى وَ إِنْ كانَ غَيْرَ ذَلِکَ فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّى وَ اصْرِفْنِى عَنْهُ.))

:(al…Imam al…Sadiq (peace be upon him) said, "Say the following (supplication

بِرَحْمَتِکَ وَ أَسْتَقْدِرُکَ الْخَيْرَ بِقُدْرَتِکَ عَلَيْهِ أَللَّهُمَّ إِنِّى أَسْتَخِيرُکَ لِاَنَّکَ عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ وَ الشَّهَادَهِ الرَّحْمَنُ الرَّحِيمُ فَأَسْأَلُکَ أَنْ تُصَلِّىَ عَلَى مُحَمَّدٍ النَّبِيِّ وَ آلِهِ كَمَا صَلَّيْتَ عَلَى إِبْرَاهِيمَ وَ آلِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ إِنَّکَ حَمِيدٌ مَجِيدٌ. أَللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ هَذَا الأَمْرُ الَّذِى أُرِيدُهُ خَيْراً لِى فِى دِينِى وَ دُنْيَایَ وَ آخِرَتِى فَيَسِّرْهُ لِى وَ إِنْ كَانَ غَيْرَ ذَلِکَ فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّى وَ اصْرِفْنِى عَنْهُ.

O' Allah! I ask you for the best by Your Mercy and by Your power since You (alone) are " the Knower of the Unseen and the Seen, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful. So ۱ ask you that you send blessings on Muhammad, the Prophet and his family just as you have sent blessings on Ibrahim and the family of Ibrahim, since verily You are the Praiseworthy and Glorious. O' Allah if there is good in this act which ۱ have made the intention to perform for my religion or my worldly affairs and my

p: ۱۸

Man La Yahdhur al…Faqih, Volume ۱, Page ۵۳۶ / Tahdhib al…Ahkam, Volume ۳, Page ۱۸۲ -۱

hereafter, then make the task easy for me and if it is not like this then turn it away from (me and let me turn away from it too."(۱)

(The Method of Seeking the Best from Imam al_Baqir (as (۱۹

قَالَ الإِمَامُ البَاقِرُ عَليهِ السَلامْ:

يَقُولُ مَا اسْتَخَارَ اللهَ عَبْدٌ قَطٌّ مِائَهَ مَرَّهٍ إِلَّا رُمِیَ بِخِیَرَهِ الأَمْرَیْنِ یَقُولُ: ((أَللهُمَّ عَالِمَ الْغَیْبِ وَ الشَّهَادَهِ إِنْ کَانَ أَمْرُ کَذَا وَ کَذَا خَیْراً لِلأَمْرِ دُنْیَایَ وَ عَاجِلِ أَمْرِی وَ آجِلِهِ فَیَسِّرْهُ لِی وَ افْتَحْ لِی بَابَهُ وَ رَضِّنِی فِیهِ بِقَضَائِکَ.))

al_Imam al_Baqir (as), said: "There is no servant, who seeks the best from Allah one hundred times by saying the following except that Allah guides him to one of the two paths". (۲)۲۷

أَللَّهُمَّ عَالِمَ الْغَیْبِ وَ الشَّهَادَهِ إِنْ کَانَ أَمْرُ کَذَا وَ کَذَا خَیْراً لِلأَمْرِ دُنْیَایَ وَ آخِرَتِی وَ عَاجِلِ أَمْرِی وَ آجِلِهِ فَیَسِّرْهُ لِی وَ افْتَحْ لِی بَابَهُ وَ رَضِّنِی فِیهِ بِقَضَائِکَ.

O' Allah the knower of the hidden and apparent. If in this action there is good for the" affairs of my world and my hereafter, then make it easy for me and open up the doors of ."it for me and make my pleasure be in that which You have decreed

(The method of `Seeking the Best' as practiced by Imam Jafar al_Sadiq (as(۲۰

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَلامْ:

تُعَظِّمُ اللهَ وَ تُمَجِّدُهُ وَ تَحْمِدُهُ وَتُصَلِّی عَلَی النَّبِیِّ وَآلِهِ (عَلَیهِمُ السَّلامُ) ثُمَّ تَقُولُ: ((أَللهُمَّ إِنِّی أَسْئَلُکَ بِأَنَّکَ عَالِمُ الْغَیْبِ وَالشَّهَادَهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِیمِ وأَنْتَ عَلاَّمُ الْغُیُوبِ أَسْتَخِیرُ اللهَ بِرَحْمَتِهِ.)) إِنْ کَانَ الأَمْرُ شَدِیداً تَخَافُ فِیهِ قُلْتَهُ مِائَهَ مَرَّهٍ وَإِنْ کَانَ غَیْرُ ذَلِکَ فَثَلاَثَ مَرَّاتٍ.

al_Imam al_Sadiq (as) said: "There is no servant of Allah 'that honor, glorifies and praises Allah, and

Wasa'il ash_Shi'a, Volume ۸, Page ۷۶, Hadith ۱۰۱۱۹ / Mahasin Barqi, Page ۵۹۹, Hadith ۹ -۱
Fath al_Abwab ۲۳۵, Wasa'il ash_Shi'a Volume ۸, Page ۷۷, Hadith ۱۰۱۲۳ -۲

:sends blessings on the Prophet and his family (as) and says

أَللهُمَّ إِنِّی أَسْئَلُکَ بِأَنَّکَ عَالِمُ الْغَیْبِ وَالشَّهَادهِ الرَّحمَنِ الرَّحِیم وَأَنْتَ عَلاَّمُ الْغُیُوب أَستَخِیرُ الله بِرَحْمَتِهِ

O' Allah! Verily I ask you since verily You are the knower of the hidden and the apparent," the Beneficent, the Merciful and You are the knower of all the Unknowns. I seek the best ."from Allah by His mercy

If the matter is something important in which there is some fear or distress, then the above supplication should be read one hundred times and in other than this, it can be read three times. " (۱)۲۸

(The method of `Seeking the Best' from Imam Musa ibn Jafar al_Kazim (as (۲۱

أَتَاهُ(مُو سَی بْنُ جَعْفِرِ عَلیهِ السَلامْ) فَقَال لَه:

جعِلْتُ فِدَاک أرِیدُ وَجهَ کَذَا و کَذَا فَعَلَّمْنِی اسْتِخَارَهً إنْ کَانَ ذَلِکَ الْوجْهُ خَیْرَهٌ أَنْ یُسَیَّرُهُ الله لِی وَإِنْ کَانَ شَرّاً صَرَّفَهُ الله عَنِّی. فَقَالَ لَهُ: وَتُحِّبُ أَنْ تَخْرُجُ فِی ذَالِک الْوجهِ؟ قَالَ الرَّجُلُ: نَعَمْ. قَالَ: قُلْ ((أَللَّهُمَّ قَدِّرْ لِی کَذَا وَ کَذَا واجْعَلْهُ خیراً لِی. فَإِنَّک تَقْدِرُ عَلیَ ذَالِکَ.))

A man enter into the presence of him (Musa ibn Jafar (as)) and said to him, `May ۱ be sacrificed for you! I want to perform a certain task. Please teach me the way to ask the best (from Allah) such that if in that work, there is good for me, that Allah makes it easy for me, and if there is bad in it for me, then Allah makes me turn away from it. The Imam (as) said to

p: ۲۰

Fath al_Abwab, Page ۲۵۵ / Bihar al_Anwar, Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۵۶ -۱

the man, "Do you want to do that task? " The man replied, "Yes. " The Imam replied, "Say the following (so that Allah makes what is good for you in the performance of that act):(۱)

أَللَّهُمَّ قَدِّرْ لِی کَذَا وَ کَذَا وَ اجْعَلْهُ خَیْراً لِی. فَإِنَّکَ تَقْدِرُ عَلَى ذَالِکَ.

O' Allah! Decree for me this and this and place goodness in it for me, since verily You are "the one who Decrees in this."

Asking for what is Best' in the Dua' of the Istikhara (۲۲

قَالَ ألإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَلیهِ السَّلامْ:

وَلْتَکُنْ إِسْتِخَارَتَکَ فِی عافِیَهٍ فَإِنَّهُ رُبَّمَا خَیرٌ لِلرَّجُلِ فِی قَطْعِ یَدِهِ

وَمَوْتِ وَلِدِه وَذَهّابِ مَالِهِ.

al-Imam al-Sadiq (as) said: "... Your seeking the best must be accompanied with requesting (something that is) good, since sometimes it is possible that what is best for a person lies in his hand being cut off, the death of his child, and the loss of his wealth and property. "(۲) [۳۰][۳۰]

(The method of `Seeking the Best' as done by the Prophet of Allah (s (۲۳

عَنِ النَّبِی صَلَّى اللهُ عَلهِ وَ الِهِ:

یَا أَنَس! إِذَا هَمَمْتَ بِأَمْرٍ فَاسْتَخِرْ ربَّکَ فِیهِ سَبْعَ مَرَّاتٍ ذُمَّ انْظُرْ إِلَى أَمْرِ الَّذِی یَسْبِقُ إِلَى قَلْبِکَ فَإِنَّ الْخَیْرَهَ فِیهِ یَعْنِی إفْعَلْ ذَالِکَ.

The Prophet of Islam said, "O' Anas! Any time you want to perform an act (then before you do it), ask Allah for the best seven times and then see what answer (either to perform it or not to perform that task) comes into your heart. That which is the best for you will be the response, meaning, whatever is in your heart should be acted upon." (۳)۳۱

Allah is the changer of hearts and desires, and He

p: ۲۱

۱- Qurb al-Isnad, Page ۳۰۰ / Bihar al-Anwar, Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۶۰, Hadith ۱۰

۲- Tahdhib al-Ahkam, Volume ۳, Page ۱۸۱, Hadith ۴۱۱ / al-Mahasin, Volume ۲, Page ۵۹۹,

Hadith ۷ / al...Kafi, Volume ۳, Page ۴۷۲, Hadith ۷ / Wasa'il ash...Shi'a, Volume ۸, Page ۶۵, Hadith ۱۰۰۹۸

Bihar al...Anwar, Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۶۵, Hadith ۱۹ ۴۶ -۳

has the power to guide His servants and remove all doubts and indecision from their .hearts

(The method of `Seeking the Best' as done by Amir al_Mo'minin 'Ali (as (۲۴

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الْبَاقِرَ عَلیهِ السَلامْ:

کَانَ أَمِیرَ الْمُؤْمِنِینَ(عَلیهِ السَلامْ) یُصَلِّی رَکْعَتَیْنِ وَیَقُولُ فِی دُبْرِهِمَا ((أَسْتَخِیرُکَ الله)) مَائَة مَرَّه ثُمَّ یَقُولُ: أَللهُمَّ إِنِّی قَدْ هَمَمْتَ بِأَمْرٍ قَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ فَإِنْ کُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ خَیْرٌ لِی فِی دِینِی وَ دُنْیَایَ وَ آخِرَتِی فَیَسِّرْهُ لِی. وَ إِنْ کُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ شَرٌّ لِی فِی دِینِی وَ دُنْیَایَ وَ آخِرَتِی فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّی. کَرِهَتْ نَفْسِی ذَالِکَ أَمْ أَحَبَّتْ فَإِنَّکَ تَعْلَمُ وَلاَ أَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتَ عَلاَّمُ الْغُیُوبِ. ثُمَّ یَعْزِمُ.

al_Imam al_Baqir (as) narrated that: `Amir al_Mo'minin (as), would pray a two rak'at Salat ;and once finished, would say

أَسْتَخِیرُکَ الله

:I seek the best from Allah " one hundred times, and then say"

أَللهُمَّ إِنِّی قَدْ هَمَمْتَ بِأَمْرٍ قَدْ عَلِمْتَهُ فَإِنْ کُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ خَیْرٌ لِی فِی دِینِی وَ دُنْیَایَ وَ آخِرَتِی فَیَسِّرْهُ لِی. وَ إِنْ کُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّهُ شَرٌّ لِی فِی دِینِی وَ دُنْیَایَ وَ آخِرَتِی فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّی. کَرِهَتْ نَفْسِی ذَالِکَ أَم أَحَبَّتْ فَإِنَّکَ تَعْلَمُ وَلاَ أَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتَ عَلاَّمُ الْغُیُوبِ. ثُمَّ یَعْزِمُ.

O' Allah! ۱ have intended to perform a task which You know. Thus, if you know that in it'" there is good for me in this world, in my religion and in the hereafter, then make it (that task) easy for me; and if you know that in it there is bad for me in this world, in my religion and in the hereafter, then let me turn away from that task; whether ۱ detest that task or I (love it, since You know (better than ۱

and ۱ do not know and You are the Knower of the Unseen. ' Then act according (to ".(whatever you feel in your heart

(The Istikhara from the heart; seeking advice from Allah (swt (۲۵

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَلامْ:

إذَا عَرَضَتْ لِأَ حَدِكُمْ حَاجَهٌ فَلْيَسْتَتِرِ اللهُ ربَّهُ فَإنْ أَشَارَ عَلَيْهِ اتَّبَعَ وَ إنْ لَمْ يُشِرْ عَلَيْهِ توقَّفَ. قَالَ قُلْتُ: يَا سَيِّدِى وَ كَيْفَ أَعْلَمُ ذَلِكَ؟ قَالَ تَسْجُدُ عَقِيبَ الْمَكْتُوبَهِ وَ تَقُولُ أَللَّهُمَّ خِرلِى مِائَهَ مَرَّهٍ ثُمَّ تَتَوَسَّلُ بِنَا وَ تُصَلِّى عَلَيْنَا تَسْتَشْفِعُ بِنَا ثُمَّ تَنْظُرُ مَا يُلْهِمُكَ تَفْعَلُهُ فَهُوَ الْذِى أَشَارعَلَيْكَ بِهِ.

al...Imam al...Sadiq (as) "When any of you want something, you must seek council with Allah, your Lord (and act according to it). If He guides you to it, then perform the act; and if He does not guide you to it, then do not perform it. " A man questioned, "I said, O' Master! And how will we know this? " The Imam replied, "Go into Sajdah after your wajib :Salat, and say the following one hundred times

أَللهُمَّ خِرْ لِى

."O' Allah, grant me what is best"

Then, perform Tawassul to us (the Ahl al...Bait) and send blessings upon us and take us as your intercessors. Then look at what is revealed (into your heart) and act according to it, (and this is the seeking council with Him (Allah).(۱)

(The method of `Seeking the Best' from Imam Jafar al_Sadiq (as (۲۶

عَليهِ السَلامْ: قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ

...فَصَلِّ رَكْعَتَيْنِ وَ اسْتَخِرِ اللهُ مَرّهٍ وَ مَرّهٍ ثُمَّ انْظُرْ أَحْزَمَ الأَمْرَيْنِ لَكَ فَافْعَلْهُ الْخِيَرَهَ فِيهِ إنْ شَاءَ اللهُ

al...Imam al...Sadiq (as) said: "...recite a two Rak'at Salat and then ask the best from Allah one hundred and one times

p: ۲۳

۱- Amali Tusi, Volume ۱, Page ۲۸۱ / Wasa'il ash...Shi'a, Volume ۸, Page ۷۴, Hadith ۱۰۱۱۴

and see which of the two ways (either to perform that act or not perform it) is stronger (in (your heart) and act accordingly, since whatever is best for you is in that, Insha_Allah. "(۱)

The only person who will be able to make use of this method of seeking what is the best is the one whose heart has been purified of the various types of whispers of Shaitan and whose heart has not become polluted with sins. Such a heart is one that still has the .desire and capability of receiving the heavenly inspiration of Allah

(The method of `Seeking the Best' from Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al_Rida (as (۲۷

عَلیهِ السَلامْ: قَالَ الإِمَامُ الْرِّضَا

إذَا أَرَدْتَ أَمْراً فَصَلِّ رَکْعَتَیْنِ وَاسْتَخِرِ اللهَ مِائَهَ مَرّهٍ وَمَا عُزِمَ لَکَ فَافْعَلْ. وَقُلْ فِی دُعَائِکَ : ((لَا إِلهَ إِلاَّ اللهُ الْعَلِیُّ الْعَظِیمُ. لَا إِلهَ إِلاَّ اللهُ الْحَلِیمُ الْکَرِیمُ. رَبِّ مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلِیٍّ خِرْ لِی فِی أَمْرِی الدُّنْیَا وَالأَخِرَهً خَیْرَهً مِنْ عِنْدِکَ مَا لَکَ فِیهِ رِضاً وَلِی فِیهِ صَلاَحٌ فِی خَیْرٍ وَعَافِیهٍ. یَا ذَالْمَنِّ وَالطَوْل.))

al_Imam al_Rida (as) said: "When you intend to do something, pray a two Rak'at Salat and seek the best from Allah one hundred times, then whatever is stronger (in your heart), :perform that. In your supplication, recite

((لَاإِلَهَ إِلاَّ اللهُ الْعَلِیُّ الْعَظِیمُ. لَا إِلهَ إِلاَّ اللهُ الْحَلِیمُ الْکَرِیمُ. رَبِّ مُحَمَّدٍ وَعَلِیٍّ خِرْ لِی فِی أَمْرِی الدُّنْیَا وَالأَخِرَهً خَیْرَهً مِنْ عِنْدِکَ مَا لَکَ فِیهِ رِضاً وَلِی فِیهِ صَلاَّحٌ فِی خَیْرٍ وَعَافِیهٍ. یَا ذَالْمَنِّ وَالطَول.))

There is no god except Allah, the Highest, the Greatest. There is no god except Allah, the` Patient, the Noble. The Lord of Muhammad and

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al_Kafi, Volume ۳, Page ۴۷۲ / Tahdhib al_Ahkam, Volume ۳, Page ۱۸۱, Hadith ۴۱۱ / Wasa'il -۱ ash_Shi'a Volume ۸, Page ۶۵, Hadith ۱۰۰۹۸

Ali! Grant me the best in my action for this world and for the next world, the best from' Yourself, that in which Your pleasure lies in and which is good for me for the goodness of the next world. O' possessor of Blessings and Mercy! " (۱)۳۴

Seeking the Best' by Asking Others for Advice (`۲۸

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَلامْ:

إذَا أَرادَ أَحَدُكُمْ أَمْراً فَلاَ يُشاوِرُ فِيهِ أَحَداً مِنَ النَّاسِ حَتَّى يَبْدَأَ فَيُشَاوِرُ اللهَ تَبارَكَ وَتَعَالَى...تَبْتَدِأُ فَتَسْتَخِيْرُ اللهَ فِيهِ أَوَّلاً ثُمَّ تُشَاوِرُ فِيهِ فَإذَا بَدَا بِااللهِ أَجْرَى لَهُ الْخَيْرَةَ عَلَى لِسَانِ مَنْ خَلْقٍ.

al_Imam al_Sadiq (as) said: `Any time one of you wishes to do something, then do not ask the advice of anyone until you ask advice from Allah, the Glorious and Most High… (in such a way that) you initially start out by asking Allah for the best in that (act) and then you take advice from others in that action; thus, since you have first asked Allah for what is best, then He will have whatever is best for you come out from the mouth of whosoever (of His creations that He pleases. "(۲

(The Method of `Seeking the Best' by Imam Jafar al_Sadiq (as (۲۸

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَلامْ:

إذَا أَرَدْتَ أَمْراً فَلاَ تُشَاوِرْ فِيهِ أَحَداً حَتَّى تُشَاوِرُ رَبَّكَ...تَقُولُ (أَسْتَخِيرُ اللهَ)) مِاَئَهَ مَرَّه ثُمَّ تُشَاوِرُ النَّاسَ فَإنَّ اللهَ يَجْرِى لَكَ لْخَيْرَهَ عَلَى لِسَانِ مَنْ أَحَبَّ.

al_Imam al_Sadiq (as) said: ` If you wish to do anything, then do not consult anybody until :you have consulted with your Lord …Say

أَسْتَخِيرُ اللهَ

I seek the best from Allah)) one hundred times and then seek consultation from people,)) since Allah will make whatever

Fiqh al_Rida, Page ۱۵۲ / Man La Yahdhurua `l_Faqih, Volume ۱, Page ۳۵۶ / al -Maqnah, - ۱ Page ۴۹

Maa'ni al_Akhbar, Page ۱۴۴ and ۱۴۵ / Mahasin Barqi, Page ۵۹۸ / Man La Yahdhura - ۲
`۱_Faqih, Volume ۱, Page ۳۵۵, Hadith ۱۵۵۳ ; al_Maqnah, Page ۳۶

(is best for you (your answer) flow from the mouth of one whom He loves. "(۱)

The narrations regarding `seeking the best' by way of consulting with others, in addition to confirming the need to ask others for advice and help, tell us that this action is very effective for one who is confused and does not know which path to choose. After reciting the supplications and asking Allah for what is truly the best, asking others for advice has .been highly recommended

Only with the help of Allah is one able to benefit from seeking council and advice from others to secure what is truly the best for ones' self. It is only with the humble supplications and asking Allah for the best that one can actually reach a state of .satisfaction

Seeking advice and council from others has been reckoned as one of the best teachers and guides; however, one should only seek council after asking Allah (swt) for what is best, and then seek advice from those people one is close to who are worthy of taking .advice from

People who are pious (Taqwa); those who keep away from following their low desires; the people who are humble towards their Lord; and those who have knowledge and .experience in life are examples of people one should request help and advice from

(Seeking the Best' by the Qur'an as done by the Prophet of Allah (s (`۳۰

قَالَ رَسُولُ الله صلی الله عَلیهِ وَآلهْ:

إِذَا أَرَدْتَ أَن تَتَفَأَلَ بِكِتَابِ اللهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ فَاقْرَأْ سُوْرَة الإِخْلاَصِ ثَلاَثَ مَرَّاتٍ ثُمَّ صَلِّ عَلى النَّبِيِّ وَآلِهِ ثَلاَثاً ثُمَّ قُلْ: ((أَللهُمَّ تَفَأَلْتُ بِكِتَابِكَ

p: ۲۶

۱- Makarim al_Akhlaq, Page ۳۶۷ / Amali Tusi, Volume ۱, Page ۲۸۱ / Bihar al Anwar, Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۵۳, Hadith ۴.

وَتَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَيْكَ فَأَرِنِي مِنْ كِتَابِكَ مَا هُوَ مَكْتُومٌ مِنْ سِرِّكَ الْمَكْنُونِ فِي غَيْبِكَ)) ثُمَّ افْتَحِ الْجَامِعَ وَخُذِ الْفَالَ مِنَ الْخَطِّ الأَوَّلِ مِنَ الْجَانِبِ الأَوَّلِ.

The Prophet of Allah (s) said: "Whenever you want to seek the best by the Book of Allah, the Glorious and Great, recite Surah al-Ikhlas three times send blessings on the Prophet :and his family three times, then say

((أللهُمَّ تَفَأَلْتُ بِكِتَابِكَ وَتَوَكَّلْتُ عَلَيْكَ فَأَرِنِي مِنْ كِتَابِكَ مَا هُوَ مَكْتُومٌ مِنْ سِرِّكَ الْمَكْنُونِ فِي غَيْبِكَ))

O Allah! I am seeking the best by Your Book and I am relying upon You so show me from ' Your book that what is written from Your secrets and known from your Unseen Knowledge.' Then open the Qur'an and take what is best for you from beginning of the ."first line on the right side page

There is no problem or religious taboo in performing the Istikhara by the Qur'an since asking Allah for the best - whether it be by the Qur'an or Tasbih beads is permitted when .a person can not come to a conclusion

After reciting the supplications asking Allah ۳۰ for the best, research and investigation, and having asked others for advice, if one is still in doubt and indecisive whether to perform or to leave a certain task, then in this scenario he is permitted to turn to Allah , and either through the Tasbih beads or the Qur'an, seek guidance (from Allah). If the Istikhara comes out "good", then one should perform the task and be

at ease; and if it comes out "bad", then one should put complete trust and reliance upon (Allah and not go through with one's plans.(۱)

The method of determining whether the outcome is `good' or `bad' from the Qur'an is that after all the etiquette and conditions of performing the Istikhara by the Qur'an have been fulfilled, if the verse that comes is one that contains a command to something good, a description of the Believers, the rewards of those who will dwell in Paradise, or the glad tidings of Paradise … then that Istikhara will indicate `good' and one should proceed with .the intended act with peace in his heart

However, if the verse that comes mentions the anger or punishment of Allah , prohibition from evil, descriptions of the non_Believers and hypocrites, explanation or description of the punishment of hell … then one should seek refuge with Allah and should not perform .the intended task

If the verse that comes is one in between these two types, then the Istikhara should be .taken as neutral

(Method of Imam Jafar al_Sadiq (as (۳۱

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَلامْ:

إذا أَرَدْتَ الإِسْتِخَارَهَ مِنَ الْكِتَابِ الْعزِيزِ فَقُلْ بَعْدَ الْبَسْمَلَهِ: ((إنْ كَانَ فِی قَضَائِکَ وَقَدَرِکَ أنْ نَمُنَّ عَلیَ شِیْعَهِ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ بِفَرَجِ وَلِیِّکَ وَ حُجَّتِکَ عَلیَ خَلْقِکَ فَأَخْرُجْ إلَیْنَا أَیَهً مِنْ کِتَابِکَ نَسْتَدِلُّ بِهَا عَلیَ ذَالِکَ.)) ثُمَّ تَفْتَحُ الْمُصْحَفِ وَتَعُدُّ سِتَّ وَرَقَاتٍ وَمِنَ السَّابِعَهِ سِتَّهَ أَسْطُرٍ وَتَنْظُرُ مَا فِیهِ.

al_Imam al_Sadiq (as) said: `If you intend to perform the Istikhara from The Noble Book :(Qur'an), then say

إِنْ کَانَ فِی قَضَائِکَ وَقَدَرِکَ أنْ نَمُنَّ عَلیَ

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۱- Taken from the Tafsir of the Qur'an by `Allamah Taba'taba'i … Volume ۶, Page ۱۸۸

شِیعَهِ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ بِفَرَجٍ وَلِیِّکَ وَ حُجَّتِکَ عَلیَ خَلْقِکَ فَأَخْرِجْ إِلَیْنَا أَیَهً مِنْ کِتَابِکَ نَسْتَدِلّ بِهَا عَلیَ ذَالِکَ.

In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. (O' Allah!) If in your plan and` destiny which you have bestowed on the Shi'a of the family of Muhammad with the speedy return of Your Guardian and Representative over Your creations, then show us a .('verse from Your Book that will guide us to it (that which is good

Then, open the book (Qur’an) and go forward six pages and on the seventh page, look at the sixth line, and take (act upon) what is in that verse. " (۱)۳۸

By no means does the Istikhara by the Qur'an or with the Tasbih beads, even after following the etiquette and all of the prerequisites, prevent one from using his brain or '.reasoning and seeking advice from others. This is also not `future-telling

Rather, if after one has thought about the task that one wants to perform, has weighed the pros and cons and has taken advice from others and is still in doubt, then at this point, .these types of Istikharas comes into play

Istikhara by the Qur’an before Salat (۳۲

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَلیهِ السَلامْ:

...أُنْظُرْ إِذَا قُمْتَ إِلَیَ الصَّلاهِ فَإِنَّ الشَّیْطَانَ أَبْعَدُ مَا یَکُونُ مِنَ الإِنْسَانِ إِذَا قَامَ إِلَی الصَّلاَهِ أَیُّ شَیْءٍ یَقَعُ فِی قَلْبِکَ فَخُذْ بِهِ أَو إِفْتَحْ الْمُصْحَفِ فَانْظُرْ إِلَی أَوَّلِ مَا تَرَی فِیهِ فَخُذْ بِهِ. إِنْ شَاءَ اللهَ.

al-Imam al-Sadiq (as) said: "... when you wake up for the Salat, see what is in your heart and take

p: ۲۹

Bihar al-Anwar, Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۴۶ -۱

that (step) since the devil is far away from the person who rises up for the Salat. Or, open up the Qur’an and take what you see on the first line (on the right hand side of the page) (and act upon it (and whatever is good for you will be in that), God Willing. "(۱

That which has been mentioned in the beginning of this Hadith regarding the performance of the Istikhara by the Qur'an is only after the Dua' and supplication for Istikhara and asking the best from Allah have been exhausted. This form of Istikhara is only permissible when doubt still remains after deep thinking, pondering on the subject, .and seeking advice from others

The above was mentioned since the relater of this Hadith, Yasa' Qummi, had asked the Imam that when he intended to perform a certain action and had asked Allah to guide him to what was the best for him, but he did not come to a clear cut answer and doubt and indecision still existed within him. It was at this time that the Imam spoke the words that .have been quoted above

(Istikhara by the Qur’an, not by augury (future telling (۳۳

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَلَيهِ السَّلامُ:

لا تَتَفَأَلْ بِالْقُرآنِ.

."al-Imam Jafar al-Sadiq (as) said: "Do not perform the augury by the Qur'an

The meaning of performing the augury by the Qur'an (in the above Hadith) which has been forbidden is to seek the knowledge of the unseen, foretelling future events, and .trying to find out the outcome of actions that one will perform in the future

,However

p: ۳۰

۱- Tahdhib al-Ahkam, Volume ۳, Page ۳۱۰ / Bihar al-Anwar, Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۴۳ / Wasa'il ash-Shi'a, Volume ۳, Page ۸۷۵, Hadith ۷۸۱۹

seeking the best by the Qur'an which has even been emphasized in the Holy Book, in reality, is just to remove doubt and uncertainty and to guide the person to choose one of .(two paths (either to perform or refrain from a certain act

In addition, one must pay close attention to the fact that in no instance should the Istikhara – be it by the Qur' an, the Tasbih beads, or papers – be performed before using one's own God-given intelligence or asking others for advice and guidance. These three types of Istikhara do not specify one's responsibility, rather, they just guide a person and remove the doubt and uncertainty from one's mind, that too after the person has thought .about the task, asked advice from others and is still at a dead end

Istikhara by Tasbih Beads by Imam al_Zamana (۳۴

عَنِ الْقَائِمِ صَلَوَانُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ فِي الإِسْتِخَارَهِ بِالسَّبْحِهِ أَنهُ يَأْخُذُهَا وَيُصَلّى عَلىَ النَّبِيِّ وآلِهِ صَلَوَاتُ اللهِ عَلَيْهِ وَعَلَيْهِمْ ثَلاثَ مَرَّاتٍ وَيَقْبِضُ عَلىَ السَّبْحِهِ وَيَعُدُّ اشْنَيْنِ اشْنَيْنِ فَإِنْ بَقِيَتْ وَاحِدَهً فَهُوَ إِفْعَلْ فَإِنْ بَقِيَتْ إِثْنَتَانِ فَهُوَ لاَ تَفْعَل.

It has been narrated from al-Qa'im regarding the Istikhara by the tasbih that: "The tasbih should be taken (in the hand), and blessings should be sent on Muhammad and his family s three times, and then pick a sport on the beads and count them two by two. If at the end only one bead remains, then you should perform that action; and if two beads remain, (then you should not perform it. "(۱

Istikhara by Papers (۳۵

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الْبَاقِرَ عَليهِ السَلاَمْ:

إِذَا أَرَدْتَ أَمْراً

p: ۳۱

Bihar al-Anwar, Volume ۹۱, Page ۲۵۰, Hadith ۴ -۱

فَخُذْ سِتَّ رِقَاعٍ فَاكْتُبْ فِی ثَلاثٍ مِنْهَا بِسْمِ اللهِ رَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِیمِ خِیَرَةً مِنَ اللهِ الْعَزِیزِ الْحَکِیمِ لِفُلانِ بْنِ فُلانَهَ افْعَلْهُ. وَ فِی ثَلاَثٍ مِنْهَا بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِیمِ خِیَرَةً مِنَ اللهِ لْعَزِیزِ الْحَکِیمِ لِفُلاَنِ بْنِ فُلاَنَهَ لاَ تَفْعَلْ. ثُمَّ ضَعْهَا تَحتَ مُصَلاَّکَ ثُمَّ صَلِّ رَکْعَتَیْنِ فإذا فَرَغْتَ فَاسْجُدْ سَجْدَهً وَ قُلْ فِیهَا مِائَهَ مَرَّهٍ أَسْتَخِیرُ اللهَ بِرَحْمَتِهِ خِیَرَةً فِی عَافِیَهٍ ثُمَ اسْتَوِ جَالِساً وَ قُلِ اللهُمَّ خِرْ لِی وَ اخْتَرْ لِی فِی جَمِیعِ أُمُورِی فِی یُسْرٍ مِنْکَ وَ عَافِیَهٍ ثُمَّ اضْرِبْ بِیَدِکَ إِلَی الرِّقَاعِ فَشَوِّشْهَا وَ أَخْرِجْ وَاحِدَهً افْعَلْ وَ الْأُخْرَی لاَ تَفْعَلْ فَأَخْرِجْ مِنَ الرِّقَاعِ إِلَی خَمْسٍ فَانْظُرْ أَکْثَرَهَا فَاعْمَلْ بِهِ وَ دَعِ السَّادِسَهَ لاَتَحْتَاجُ إِلَیْهَا.

al_Imam al_Baqir (as) said: `If you intend to do something, then take six pieces of paper and on three of them write:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِیمِ خِیَرَةً مِنْ اللهِ الْعَزِیزِ الْحَکِیمِ لِفُلانِ بْنِ فُلانَه افْعَلْهُ

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Goodness is from Allah, the Great, the Wise for Fulan the son of Fulan (put your name here) he will do (it).

On the other three pieces of paper write:

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِیمِ خِیَرَةً مِنَ اللهِ الْعَزِیزِ الْحَکِیمِ لِفُلاَنِ بْنِ فُلاَنَه لاَ تَفْعلْ

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. Goodness is from Allah, the Great, the Wise for Fulan the son of Fulan (put your name here) he will not do (it).

Then place them under your prayer mat. Read a two rak`at Salat and when you finish, go into sajdah and recite the following one hundred times:

أَسْتَخِیرُ

p: ۳۲

اللهَ بِرَحْمَتِهِ خِيَرَةً فِی عَافِيَهٍ

.I seek that which is good from Allah through His Mercy, the goodness for the outcome

:Then get up and while sitting say

اللهُمَّ خِرْ لِی وَ اخْتَرْ لِی فِی جَمِيعِ أُمُورِی فِی يُسْرٍ مِنْکَ وَ عَافِيَهٍ

Following this, with your hands shuffle the six papers and one by one choose three of :them. If three of the cards come up with

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ خِيَرَهً مِنَ اللهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ لِفُلَانِ بْنِ فُلَانَهَ افْعَلْهُ.

Then perform the action that you had intended to do. However, if three of the cards come :up with

بِسْمِ اللهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ خِيَرَهً مِنَ اللهِ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَكِيمِ لِفُلَانِ بْنِ فُلَانَهَ لَا تَفْعَلْ

Then do not perform that action which you had intended to do. If one of the cards said to perform the act and the other one said not to perform the act, then pick up the cards until you have picked up five and see which of them is more and act according to it; and it is not necessary to pickup the sixth one. " (۱)۴۱

Section ۷: The Best Time to Perform Istikhara

Istikhara after a two Rak`at Mustahab Salat (۳۶

قَالَ الإِمَامُ جَوادِ عَليهِ السَّلامْ:

...وَلْتَكُنْ الإِسْتِخَارَهُ بَعْدَ صَلاَتِکَ رَکْعَتَيْن.

Imam al_Jawad (as) aid: `It is best that you seek the best (from Allah) after a two rakat Salat. " (۲)۴۲

Istikhara after Salat (۳۷

قَال الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَّلامْ:

إِذَا أَرَادَ أَحَدُكُمْ شَيْئاً فَلْيُصَلِّ رَکْعَتَيْنِ ثُمَّ لْيَحْمَدِ اللهَ وَ لْيُثْنِ عَلَيْهِ وَ يُصَلِّی عَلَی النَّبِیِّ وَ أَهْلِ بَيْتِهِ وَ يَقُولُ: ((أَللهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ هَذَا الأَمْر خَيْراً لِی فِی دِينِی وَ دُنْيَایَ فَيَسِّرْهُ لِی وَ اقْدِرْهُ وَ إِنْ كَانَ غَيْرَ ذَلِکَ فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّی.))

,(Imam al_Sadiq (as

p: ۳۳

Bihar al_Anwar, Volume ۸۸, Page ۲۳۰, Hadith ۵ / al_Kafi, Volume ۳, Page ۴۷۰ -۱

Fath al_Abwab, Page ۱۴۳ / Wasa'il ash_Shi'a, Volume ۸, Page ۷۷, Hadith ۱۰۱۲۲ -۲

said: `If any of you wish to do something, (then start off by) praying a two rak`at Salat and praise and extol Allah and send blessings on the Prophet and his family then say:

أَللهُمَّ إِنْ كَانَ هَذَا الأَمْرُ خَيْراً لِى فِى دِينِى وَ دُنْيَاىَ فَيَسِّرْهُ لِى وَ اقْدِرْهُ وَ إِنْ كَانَ غَيْرَ ذَلِكَ فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنّى.

O' Allah if there is good in this action for me in my religion and in my life, then make it easy for me and destine it for me; but if it is other than this, then turn it away from me. " (۱)۴۳

Istikhara after Salat al_Fajr (۳۸

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَليهِ السَّلامْ:

إِذَا صَلَّيْتَ صَلاَةَ الْفَجْرِ فَقُلْ بَعْدَ أَنْ تَرْفَعَ يَدَيكَ حِذَاءَ وَجهِكَ: ((أَللهُمَّ إِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ وَلاَ أَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتَ عَلاَّمُ الْغُيُوبِ فَصَلِّ عَلىَ مُحَمَّدٍ وآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَخِرْ لِى فِى جَمِيعِ مَا أَمَرْتُ بِهِ مِنِ أُمورى خِيَارَ بَرَكَةٍ وَعَافِيَةٍ.)) ثُمَّ تَقُولُ فِى الْسَجْدَهِ مِائَهَ مَرَّهٍ : ((أَسْتَخِيرُ اللهَ بِرَحْمَتِكَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُ اللهَ فِى عَافِيَهٍ بِقُدْرَتِهِ.)) ثُمَّ أَتَتْ حَاجَتُكَ فَإِنَّهَا خَيْرٌ لَكَ فِى كُلِّ حَالٍ.

Imam Jafar al_Sadiq (as) said: "When you have finished Salat al_Fajr, then lift up your hands such that they are in front of your face and say the following:

أَللهُمَّ إِنَّكَ تَعْلَمُ وَلاَ أَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتَ عَلاَّمُ الْغُيُوبِ فَصَلِّ عَلىَ مُحَمَّدٍ وآلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَخِرْ لِى فِى جَمِيعِ مَا أَمَرْتُ بِهِ مِنِ أُمورى خِيَارَ بَرَكَةٍ وَعَافِيَةٍ.

O' Allah, verily You know (better) and we do not know and you are the Knower of the Unseen, so send blessings on Muhammad and the family of Muhammad and give me the best in all that

p: ۳۴

۱- Man La Yahduru al_Faqihi, Volume ۱, Page ۳۵۵, Hadith ۱۵۵۴ / Tahdhib al Ahkam, Volume ۳, Page ۱۸۰ / Wasa'il ash_Shi'a, Volume ۸, Page ۶۶, Hadith ۱۰۰۹۹

.(I resolve to do of that which will be a blessing and good (for me

:Then go into sajdah and say the following line one hundred times

أَسْتَخِيرُ اللهَ بِرَحْمَتِکَ وَأَسْتَقْدِرُ اللهَ فِی عَافِیَهٍ بِقُدْرَتِه.

I ask the best from Allah by Your Mercy, and I seek the power and strength to perform ."this good work from Allah

Then, ask for your (legitimate) desires since in this is what is good for you in whatever ."happens

Istikhara in the Final Sajdah of Salat al_Lail (۳۹

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَلیهِ السَّلامْ:

أَسْتَخِرِاللهَ فِی أَخِرِ رَکْعَهٍ مِنْ صَلاَهِ اللَّیْلِ وَأَنْتَ سَاجِدٌ مِائَهَ مَرَّهِ وَ مَرَّهٍ تَقُولُ ((أَسْتَخِیرُ اللهَ بِرَحْمَتِهِ)).

al_Imam al_Sadiq (as) said: "In your final rakat of Salat al_Lail, while you are in sajdah, ask :Allah for the best by reciting the following one hundred and one times

أَسْتَخِیرُ اللهَ بِرَحْمَتِهِ

(I seek the best from Allah by His mercy. "(۱)`

Istikhara in the Final Sajdah of Nafilah of Salat al_Fajr (۴۰

قَالَ الإِمَامُ الصَّادِقُ عَلیهِ السَّلامْ:

أَنْ یَسْتَخِیرَ اللهَ الرَّجُلُ لا فِی أَخِرِ سَجْدَهٍ مِنْ رَکْعَتِی الْفَجْرِ مِائَه مَرّهٍ و مَرّهً تَحْمَدُ اللهَ وَ تُصِلّی عَلَیَ النَّبِی وَآلِهِ ثُمَّ تَسْتَخِیرُ اللهَ خَمْسِینَ مَرَّهً ثُمَّ تَحْمَدُ اللهَ وَ تُصَلّی عَلَیَ النَّبِیَّ وَ تَمِّمْ الْمِائَه وَ الْوَاحِدَه.

Imam al_Sadiq (as) said the following regarding asking Allah for the best: "In the final sajdah of the recommended prayers of Salat al_Fair, one should seek the best from Allah by praising Allah and sending blessings on the Prophet and his family and then by asking Allah for the best fifty times followed by praising Allah and sending blessings on the Prophet one hundred and one times. " (۲)۴۵

Section ۸: Views of the Mara'ja Taqlid and Scholars of Islam Regarding the Istikhara

View of Ayatullah Khomeini

There are two meanings of"

p: ۳۵

۱- Makarim al_Akhlaq, Page ۳۲۰ /Man La Yahdhuru al_Faqihi, Volume ۱, Page ۳۵۵, Hadith ۱۵۵۵

۲- Wasa'il ash_Shia, Volume ۸, Page ۷۳, Hadith ۱۰۱۱۲ / Man La Yahdhuru al_Faqih, Volume ۱, Page ۳۵۵, Hadith ۱۵۵۶

the word Istikhara ... one of them is the actual meaning and more than all the other types has been mentioned in our narrations (ahadith) and is the most common, and this is .simply supplicating and asking Allah for the best

This type of Istikhara has its roots in supplicating (to Allah) in all actions that a person .performs, and is not only admirable, but is recommended (Mustahab) in Islam

The other meaning of Istikhara is when a person is confused and perplexed about whether to perform an act or not, such that it (that act) is not something that Allah ?t has ordered us to perform such that His guidance would be there nor that our intelligence could help us to decide if it is good or bad. If there is no way for a person to decide whether to perform a task or not, and in the state of confusion and uncertainty, instead of simply guessing and performing the act, the person seeks refuge with the All-Knowing .Allah , who all in distress turn towards and seek council from

Allah will either guide him through his heart and thus reveal to him which path to choose, '.(since in reality, He is the Changer of hearts (in relation to the `spiritual Istikhara

Otherwise, He will place the person's hand on a certain part of the Tasbih. (if he is performing the Istikhara by way of the Tasbih beads), or he will guide His servant's heart by the Qur'an (if he is using

.(the Qur'an for his Istikhara

Is it not that a person who is confused, after using his own common_sense and asking advice and help from others in need of guidance so as to open his path? Can it be that a person, whose `lamp of thinking' has gone dim and has sought help from others around ?him not in need of advice and guidance

In one of the verses of the Qur'an, Allah after mentioning and counting all of His powers :and the blessings which He has showered says

(Or; Who answers the distressed one when he calls upon Him and removes the evil?(۱"

However, there are examples that people who are against Istikhara mention, such as the incident in which there was a girl who liked a young boy and in all ways, were compatible with each other, but after talking with one another, the Istikhara was performed and it came out 'bad' and the discussion ended there. Another example is about a person who wanted to purchase a house. Everything was fine and in all ways, the house was ideal ... he .performed an Istikhara and it came out bad, so he decided not to purchase the house

It is clear that the reply to them and thousands of people like these regarding the Istikhara (and the proper use of it), is that in instances such as these, only one who has no intelligence, who is defiant, and who does not have a correct understanding of the Istikhara would perform it in

p: ۳۷

Surah Naml (۲۷) Verse ۶۲ -۱

.these instances

It also goes without saying that the ahadith that have come to us with regards to the Istikhara have not promised us that we will reach our goal without any troubles or difficulties. Rather, that which has been promised is that whosoever asks Allah for good, will be granted good. If it is good for the person in his worldly life, then he will be granted his wish; and if it not, then it will be stored for him and bestowed upon him in the next ."world

View of `Allamah Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Tabataba'i

When a person makes the intention to perform a certain act, then he has no choice but" to investigate concerning it, and as much as he is able to, he must ponder and think … .using the power that Allah has given him …whether or not to do that particular thing

In the event that he is not able to come to a conclusion (if what is good for him is in that act), then he must ask others for advice and let his decision lie on the advice of others … those who are able to offer advice and have the ability to distinguish between good and .bad

He should rely on their rationale to come to a conclusion whether to proceed with an action or to leave it. If this route too does not produce results, then he is left with no other alternative except that he pleads to His Lord and asks Him for guidance to what is truly .best for him

In

reality, this is the Istikhara. This must not be referred to as `gaining knowledge of the .unseen' or an incursion on Allah's guardianship and mastership upon us

In summary, there is no responsibility on the religion when one performs an Istikhara, since the Istikhara does nothing except determine which way a person should act. The Istikhara does not change the rules of Allah nor does it inform the servant of Allah that what is hidden behind the curtains of Allah's knowledge. The only thing that an Istikhara does is declare: "That what is in the prime interest of a person who is seeking the best is ."in the performance or non…performance of an act

The Istikhara is the means from which one is saved from doubt and uncertainty. However, as for the after…effects that will happen in the future by either performing or not performing the action, they are not the responsibility of the Istikhara, and the .Istikhara has no relation to this

The future of a person who performs the Istikhara … whether it will be good or bad … is just like the person who had not performed an Istikhara and carried on with his life using his own intellect and asking advice from others. In short, the Istikhara is nothing more than an act that provides "satisfaction of the heart," "removes doubt and uncertainty," ."and is a tool for "hope, prosperity and happiness

From the authentic narrations related from both the Shi`a and the Ahl alSunnah, it has been mentioned that

the Prophet of Islam s used to ask for the best and used to encourage those around him to do so. He forbid people to ridicule the Istikhara and said, "Any time the Istikhara comes ."out `bad', have reliance on Allah and go on with the work

Therefore, there is no problem with performing an Istikhara by way of the Qur'an or other things, since if the Istikhara comes out favourable, then the person will perform the action with a content heart and a pure soul; and if it comes out bad, then he has relied ."upon Allah and should continue with his work

View of `Allamah Shahid Murtadha Mutahhari

What kind of talk is this that the `Ulama (only) must perform the Istikhara! How many"... problems this misconception has brought up! An `Alim is sitting in his house, busy studying or writing, the telephone rings and the person on the other end asks: `Sir! I am ...'sorry to bother you, I need an Istikhara

Regardless, I myself perform Istikhara (for others), and I am not opposed to it, but it is better that each person performs an Istikhara for himself. Some people have even said that it is not allowed for a person to perform an Istikhara for someone else and everyone !"must perform it for himself

View of Ayatullah Shahid Dasthaghaib Shirazi

Istikhara literally means to `ask the best' from Allah . O' Allah! I am perplexed and do not" know if Your pleasure is in this task or not (which I wish to perform). I ask You to make apparent Your pleasure

p: ۴۰

.upon me

However, in this state, it is necessary for one to supplicate to Allah (swt), and the true Istikhara is just this … supplication. If by this method, one's confusion is not removed, then it is not a problem that to remove the doubt and uncertainty, then one acts according to that which has been mentioned in the narrations and by either the Tasbih or the Qur'an, .he can seek to alleviate his difficulties

However, two conditions must be fulfilled, the first is that the person must be in a state of supplication meaning that his state be such that he truly feels: `O' Allah! Please remove .'the doubt in me through the blessings of the Glorious Qur'an

The second condition, which is the most important one, is understanding the context and meaning of the verses of the holy Qur'an … including the particularities in relation to an .Istikhara

It must be made known that the Qur'an was not revealed simply to perform the Istikhara. Rather, it is a book of knowledge and wisdom, which guides one to the paths of servitude of Allah . Don't get me wrong, I am not opposed to performing the Istikhara by the .Qur'an, but those two conditions must be primarily fulfilled

In the event that after thinking, supplicating and asking others for advice, one still remains in a state of doubt, then the best way to remove this uncertainty, which has also been mentioned in the narrations, is to perform an Istikhara, and that too by the

method known as "Dhat al_Raqa"(۱) eaning the Istikhara using papers, which even the ."most well_known Fuqaha' (Scholars) used to perform

View of Ayatullah al_`Uzma Shaykh Muhammad Taqi Behjat

Regarding the instances in which one should perform an Istikhara _ after seeking advice" from those people who are well informed and knowledgeable, if there still remains doubt, .then and only then should one perform an Istikhara

The various types and methods of Istikhara have been mentioned in Mafatih al_Jinan and the various books of ahadith. As for the question that is anyone able to perform an Istikhara by the Qur'an or Tasbih beads for himself or not, it must be stated that if all the ."conditions and etiquette are followed, then it is not a problem

View of Ayatullah al_`Uzma Shaykh Nasir Makarim Shirazi

There are numerous narrations relating to the Istikhara, and it in itself (the Istikhara) is" something that is good to perform. Many successful results have been seen from it, as long as thinking and contemplation, and seeking the advice from others proves to be not .enough for the person to make up his mind to perform or not to perform a certain task

In such a situation of doubt, it is in place to perform an Istikhara. However, whatever the outcome may be, whether it is in accordance with one's wishes or against one's desires, it mast be accepted. Anytime, one performs an Istikhara by asking others for advice and help, one should accept that and must not proceed with the `traditional Istikhara', since it .is clear that this was not a place to perform that Istikhara

However

Hadith ۳۵ as found in this book -۱

in this type of a situation, it is better than after waiting some time, give some charity, and then carries on with the task.

We have mentioned the conditions for a proper Istikhara in writing and the people can refer to the book `Qawa'id al_Fiqhiha' in the last discussion on `casting lots' for more information."

A Supplication from Imam `Ali ibn al_Husayn Zain al_ `Abidin

Supplication from Imam `Ali ibn al_Husayn Zain al_ `Abidin peace be upon him, from al_Sahifatul Sajjadiyah

The following Dua' has been taught to us by the ۴th Imam, al_Sajjad, peace be upon him, as he is commonly known. The Arabic and English Dua' are as follows:

أَللَّهُمَّ إنِّى أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ فَصَلِّ عَلَى مُحَمَّد وآلِهِ وَاقْضِ لِىْ بِالْخِيَرَه وَأَلْهِمْنَا مَعْرِفَهَ الاخْتِيارِ، وَاجْعَل ذَلِكَ ذَرِيعَهً إلى الرِّضا بِما قَضَيْتَ لَنَا وَالتَّسْلِيْمِ لِمَا حَكَمْتَ. فَأَزِح عَنَّا رَيْبَ الارتياب، وَأَيِدْنا بِيَقِينِ الْمخْلِصِينَ، وَلاتَسُمْنا عَجْزَ الْمَعْرِفهِ عَمَّا تَخَيَّرْت، فَنَغْمِط قَدْرَكَ، وَنَكْرَهُ مَوضِعَ رِضاكَ،

ونجْنَحَ إلَى الَّتِى هَى أَبْعَدُ مِنْ حُسْنِ العاقِبه وَأَقْرَبُ إلى ضِدِّالْعافيِه، حَبِّبْ إلَيْنا مانَكرَهُ مِنْ قَضائِكَ وَ سَهِّل عَلَيْنَا مَا نَسْتَصْعِبُ مِنْ حُكْمِكَ، وَأَلهمنا الانْقِياد لِمَا أَوْرَدْتَ عَلَيْنا منْ مَشِيَّتِكَ حَتَّى لا نُحِبَّ تَأخِيرَ ما عَجَّلْتَ، ولاتَعْجِيْلَ ماأَخَّرْتَ، وَلانَكْرَهَ مَا أَحْبَبْتَ، ولاَنَتَخَيَّرَ ما كَرِهْت، وَاخْتِمْ لَنَا بِالَّتِى هِىَ أَحْمَدُ عاقِبهً وَأَكْرَمُ مَصِيراً إنَّكَ تُفِيدُ الْكَرِمَهَ وَتُعْطِى الْجَسِيمَهَ، وَتَفْعَل ماتُرِيدُ وَأَنْتَ عَلَى كُلِّ شَىءٍ قَدِيرٌ.

O' God, I ask from Thee the best in Thy knowledge, so bless Muhammad and his Household and decree for me the best!

Inspire us with knowledge to chose the best and make that a means to being pleased with what Thou hast decreed for us and submitting

to what Thou hast decided! Banish from us the doubt of misgiving and confirm us with the certainty of the sincere!

Visit us not with incapacity to know what Thou hast chosen, lest we despise Thy measuring out, dislike the place of Thy good pleasure, and incline toward that which is further from good outcome and nearer to the opposite of well-being!

Make us love what we dislike in Thy decree and make easy for us what we find difficult in Thy decision!

Inspire us to yield to that which Thou bringest upon us by Thy will, lest we love the delay of what Thou hast hastened and the hastening of what Thou hast delayed, dislike what Thou lovest, and choose what Thou dislikest!

Seal us with that which is most praised in outcome and most generous in issue! Surely Thou givest generous gain, bestowest the immense, dost what Thou wilt, and Thou art powerful over everything!

p: ۴۴

About center

In the name of Allah

هَلْيَسْتَوِيالَّذِينَيَعْلَمُونَوَالَّذِينَلَايَعْلَمُونَ

?Are those who know equal to those who do not know

al-Zumar: ٩

:Introduction

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan, from ٢٠٠٧, under the authority of Ayatollah Haj SayyedHasanFaqihImami (God blesses his soul), by sincere and daily efforts of university and seminary elites and sophisticated groups began its activities in .religious, cultural and scientific fields

:Manifesto

Ghaemiyeh Computer Research Institute of Isfahan in order to facilitate and accelerate the accessibility of researchers to the books and tools of research, in the field of Islamic science, and regarding the multiplicity and dispersion of active centers in this field and numerous and inaccessible sources by a mere scientific intention and far from any kind of social, political, tribal and personal prejudices and currents, based on performing a project in the shape of (management of produced and published works from all Shia centers) tries to provide a rich and free collection of books and research papers for the experts, and helpful contents and discussions for the educated generation and all classes .of people interested in reading, with various formats in the cyberspace

:Our Goals are

(propagating the culture and teachings of Thaqalayn (Quran and Ahlulbayt p.b.u.t-

encouraging the populace particularly the youth in investigating the religious issues-

replacing useful contents with useless ones in the cellphones, tablets and computers-

providing services for seminary and university researchers-

spreading culture study in the publich-

paving the way for the publications and authors to digitize their works-

:Policies

acting according to the legal licenses-

relationship with similar centers-

avoiding parallel working-

merely presenting scientific contents-

mentioning the sources-

.It's obvious that all the responsibilities are due to the author

:Other activities of the institute

Publication of books, booklets and other editions-

Holding book reading competitions-

Producing virtual, three dimensional exhibitions, panoramas of religious and tourism-places

.Producing animations, computer games and etc-

Launching the website with this address: www.ghaemiyeh.com-

Fabricatingdramatic and speech works-

Launching the system of answering religious, ethical and doctrinal questions-

Designing systems of accounting, media and mobile, automatic and handy systems, web-kiosks

Holding virtual educational courses for the public-

Holding virtual teacher-training courses-

Producing thousands of research software in three languages (Persian, Arabic and-English) which can be performed in computers, tablets and cellphones and available and downloadable with eight international formats: JAVA, ANDROID, EPUB, CHM, PDF, HTML, CHM, GHB on the website

Also producing four markets named "Ghaemiyeh Book Market" with Android, IOS,-WINDOWS PHONE and WINDOWS editions

:Appreciation

We would appreciate the centers, institutes, publications, authors and all honorable .friends who contributed their help and data to us to reach the holy goal we follow

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